Theodosius II

Theodosius II (Latin: *Flavius Theodosius Junior Augustus*;[1] Greek: Θεοδόσιος Βʹ; 10 April 401 – 28 July 450),[2] commonly surnamed **Theodosius the Younger**,[3] or **Theodosius the Calligrapher**, was the Eastern Roman Emperor for most of his life, taking the throne as an infant in 402 and ruling as the Eastern Empire's sole emperor after the death of his father Arcadius in 408. He is mostly known for promulgating the Theodosian law code, and for the construction of the Theodosian Walls of Constantinople. He also presided over the outbreak of two great Christological controversies, Nestorianism and Eutychianism.

Theodosius II	
Augustus of the Eastern Roman Empire	
	
Bust of Theodosius II in the Louvre	
Emperor of the Roman Empire	
Reign	January 402 – 1 May 408 (with Arcadius); 1 May 408 – 28 July 450 (alone, with Anthemius and later Pulcheria acting as regent from 408 to 416)
Predecessor	Arcadius
Successor	Pulcheria
Co-emperors	Arcadius (402-408) Pulcheria (414-450) Honorius (Western Emperor, 402-423) Valentinian III (Western Emperor, 423-450)
Born	10 April 401
Died	28 July 450 (aged 49)
Burial	Church of the Holy Apostles

Contents

Life

Theodosius was born in 401 as the only son of Emperor Arcadius and his Frankish-born wife Aelia Eudoxia. Already in January 402 he was proclaimed co-Augustus by his father, thus becoming the youngest person ever to bear this title in Roman history.[4] In 408, his father died and the seven-year-old boy became Emperor of the Eastern half of the Roman Empire.

According to Procopius, the Sasanian king Yazdegerd I (399-420) was appointed by Arcadius as the guardian of Theodosius, whom Yazdegerd treated as his own child, sending a tutor to raise him and warning that enmity toward him would be taken as enmity toward Persia.[5]

Government was at first by the Praetorian Prefect Anthemius, under whose supervision the Theodosian land walls of Constantinople were constructed.

In 414, Theodosius' older sister Pulcheria was proclaimed Augusta and assumed the regency. By 416 Theodosius was declared Augustus in his own right and the regency ended, but his sister remained a strong influence on him. In June 421, Theodosius married Aelia Eudocia, a woman of Greek origin.[6][7][8][9][10] The two had a daughter named Licinia Eudoxia. A separation ultimately occurred between the imperial couple, with Eudocia's establishment in Jerusalem where she favoured monastic Monophysitism and Pulcheria reassuming an influential role with the support of the eunuch Chrysaphius.

Wife	Aelia Eudocia
Issue	Licinia Eudoxia
Full name	
Flavius Theodosius Junior	
Regnal name	
Imperator Caesar Flavius Theodosius Junior Augustus	
Father	Arcadius
Mother	Aelia Eudoxia

Theodosius' increasing interest in Christianity, fuelled by the influence of Pulcheria, led him to go to war against the Sassanids (421–422), who were persecuting Christians; the war ended in a stalemate, when the Romans were forced to accept peace as the Huns menaced Constantinople.[11]



Solidus of Theodosius II, 439-450

In 423, the Western Emperor Honorius, Theodosius' uncle, died and the *primicerius notariorum* Joannes was proclaimed Emperor. Honorius' sister Galla Placidia and her young son Valentinian fled to Constantinople to seek Eastern assistance and after some deliberation in 424 Theodosius opened the war against Joannes. On 23 October 425, Valentinian III was installed as Emperor of the West with the assistance of the *magister officiorum* Helion, with his mother acting as regent. To strengthen the ties between the two parts of the Empire, Theodosius' daughter Licinia Eudoxia was betrothed to Valentinian.

University and Law Code

In 425, Theodosius founded the University of Constantinople with 31 chairs (15 in Latin and 16 in Greek). Among the subjects were law, philosophy, medicine, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music and rhetoric.

In 429, Theodosius appointed a commission to collect all of the laws since the reign of Constantine I, and create a fully formalized system of law. This plan was left unfinished, but the work of a second commission that met in Constantinople, assigned to collect all of the general legislations and bring them up to date, was completed; their collection was published as the *Codex Theodosianus* in 438. The law code of Theodosius II, summarizing edicts promulgated since Constantine, formed a basis for the law code of Emperor Justinian I, the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, in the following century.

Wars with the Huns, Vandals, and Persians

The war with Persia proved indecisive, and a peace was arranged in 422 without changes to the *status quo*. The later wars of Theodosius were generally less successful.

The Eastern Empire was plagued by raids by the Huns. Early in Theodosius II's reign Romans used internal Hun discord to overcome Uldin's invasion of the Balkans. The Romans strengthened their fortifications and in 424 agreed to pay 350 pounds of gold to encourage the Huns to remain at peace with the Romans. In 433 with the rise of Attila and Bleda to unify the Huns, the payment was doubled to 700 pounds.

When Roman Africa fell to the Vandals in 439, both Eastern and Western Emperors sent forces to Sicily, intending to launch an attack on the Vandals at Carthage, but this project failed. Seeing the Imperial borders without significant forces, the Huns and Sassanid Persia both attacked and the expeditionary force had to be recalled. During 443 two Roman armies were defeated and destroyed by the Huns. Anatolius negotiated a peace agreement; the Huns withdrew in exchange for humiliating concessions, including an annual tribute of 2,100 Roman pounds (ca. 687 kg) of gold.[12] In 447 the Huns went through the Balkans, destroying among others the city of Serdica (Sofia) and reaching Athyra (Büyükçekmece) on the outskirts of Constantinople.

Theological disputes



Theodosius welcomes the relics of John Chrysostom. Miniature from the early 11th century.

During a visit to Syria, Theodosius met the monk Nestorius, who was a renowned preacher. He appointed Nestorius Archbishop of Constantinople in 428. Nestorius quickly became involved in the disputes of two theological factions, which differed in their Christology. Nestorius tried to find a middle ground between those who, emphasizing the fact that in Christ God had been born as a man, insisted on calling the Virgin Mary *Theotokos* ("birth-giver of God"), and those who rejected that title because God, as an eternal being, could not have been born. Nestorius suggested the title *Christotokos* ("birth-giver of Christ") as a compromise, but it did not find acceptance with either faction. He was accused of separating Christ's divine and human natures, resulting in "two Christs", a heresy later called Nestorianism. Though initially supported by the emperor, Nestorius found a forceful opponent in Archbishop Cyril of Alexandria. At the request of Nestorius, the emperor called a council, which convened in Ephesus in 431. This council affirmed the title *Theotokos* and condemned Nestorius, who returned to his monastery in Syria and was eventually exiled to a remote monastery in Egypt.

Almost twenty years later, the theological dispute broke out again, this time caused by the Constantinopolitan abbot Eutyches, whose Christology was understood by some to mingle Christ's divine and human nature into one. Eutyches was condemned by Archbishop Flavian of Constantinople but found a powerful friend in Cyril's successor Dioscurus of Alexandria. Another council was convoked in Ephesus in 449, later deemed a "robber synod" by Pope Leo I because of its tumultuous circumstances. This council restored Eutyches and deposed Flavian, who was mistreated and died shortly afterwards. Leo of Rome and many other bishops protested against the outcome, but the emperor supported it. Only after his death in 450 would the decisions be reversed at the Council of Chalcedon.

Death

Theodosius died in 450 as the result of a riding accident. In the ensuing power struggle, his sister Pulcheria, who had recently returned to court, won out against the eunuch Chrysaphius. She married the general Marcian, thereby making him Emperor.

Like Constantine the Great and several of his successors, he was buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles, in a porphyry sarcophagus that was described in the 10th century by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in the *De Ceremoniis*.[13]

See also

- Flavia (gens)
- House of Theodosius
- List of Byzantine emperors

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4. http://www.roman-empire.net/constant/theodosius-II.html
5. Alireza Shapour Shahbazi, "Byzantine-Iranian relations" (http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/byzantine-iranian-relations), *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 15 December 1990.
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External links

- Reign of Theodosius II (http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/BURLAT/7*.html) (chapter of J. B. Bury's History of the Later Roman Empire)
- Theodosian Code: (http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/codex-theod1.html) Sections concerning religious observances (English)
- George Long, "Codex Theodosianus" (http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA*/Codex_Theodosianus.html)
- Nathan, Geoffrey, "Theodosius II (408–450 A.D.)", *De Imperatoribus Romanis* (http://www.roman-emperors.org/theo2.htm)
- This list of Roman laws of the fourth century (http://www.fourthcentury.com/index.php/imperial-laws-chart-395) shows laws passed by Theodosius II relating to Christianity.

Theodosius II **House of Theodosius** **Born:** April 401 **Died:** 28 July 450		
Regnal titles		
Preceded by **Arcadius**	**Eastern Roman Emperor** 402–450 with Arcadius (402-408)	Succeeded by **Marcian**
Political offices		
Preceded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Arcadius Augustus V,** **Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus V**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 403 *with Flavius Rumoridus*	Succeeded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus VI,** **Aristaenetus**
Preceded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Arcadius Augustus VI,** **Anicius Petronius Probus**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 407 *with Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus VII*	Succeeded by **Anicius Auchenius Bassus,** **Flavius Philippus**
Preceded by **Anicius Auchenius Bassus,** **Flavius Philippus**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 409 *with Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus VIII* *Imp. Caesar Flavius Claudius Constantinus Augustus*	Succeeded by **Varanes,** **Tertullus**
Preceded by **Varanes,** **Tertullus**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 411	Succeeded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus IX,** **Imp. Caesar Flavius Theodosius Augustus V**
Preceded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Theodosius Augustus IV**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 412 *with Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus IX*	Succeeded by **Flavius Lucius,** **Heraclianus**
Preceded by **Flavius Constantius,** **Flavius Constans**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 415 *with Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus X*	Succeeded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Theodosius Augustus VII,** **Flavius Junius Quartus Palladius**
Preceded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus X,** **Imp. Caesar Flavius Theodosius Augustus VI**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 416 *with Flavius Junius Quartus Palladius*	Succeeded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus XI,** **Flavius Constantius II**
Preceded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus XI,** **Flavius Constantius II**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 418 *with Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus XII*	Succeeded by **Flavius Monaxius,** **Flavius Plinta**

Preceded by **Flavius Monaxius,** **Flavius Plinta**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 420 *with Flavius Constantius III*	Succeeded by **Flavius Eustathius,** **Flavius Agricola**
Preceded by **Flavius Eustathius,** **Flavius Agricola**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 422 *with Imp. Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus XIII*	Succeeded by **Flavius Asclepiodotus,** **Flavius Avitus Marinianus**
Preceded by **Flavius Castinus,** **Flavius Victor**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 425 *with Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Caesar* *Imp. Caesar Iohannes Augustus (only in Rome)*	Succeeded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Theodosius Augustus XII,** **Imp. Caesar Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Augustus II**
Preceded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Theodosius Augustus XI,** **Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Caesar,** **Imp. Caesar Flavius Ioannes Augustus (only in Rome)**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 426 *with Imp. Caesar Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Augustus II*	Succeeded by **Flavius Hierius,** **Flavius Ardabur**
Preceded by **Flavius Florentius,** **Flavius Dionysius**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 430 *with Imp. Caesar Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Augustus III*	Succeeded by **Flavius Anicius Auchenius Bassus,** **Flavius Antiochus**
Preceded by **Flavius Aetius,** **Flavius Valerius**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 433 *with Petronius Maximus*	Succeeded by **Flavius Ardaburius Asparus,** **Flavius Areobindus**
Preceded by **Flavius Ardaburius Asparus,** **Flavius Areobindus**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 435 *with Imp. Caesar Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Augustus IV*	Succeeded by **Flavius Anthemius Isidorus Theophilus,** **Flavius Senator**
Preceded by **Flavius Aetius II,** **Flavius Sigisvultus**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 438 *with Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus*	Succeeded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Theodosius Augustus XVII,** **Festus**
Preceded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Theodosius Augustus XVI,** **Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 439 *with Flavius Rufius Postumius Festus*	Succeeded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Augustus V,** **Anatolius**
Preceded by **Petronius Maximus II,** **Flavius Paterius**	**Consul of the Roman Empire** 444 *with Fl. Caecina Decius Aginatius Albinus*	Succeeded by **Imp. Caesar Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Augustus VI,** **Flavius Nomus**